

Traditional Cultural Properties and Consultation with Traditional Communities

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The 58th Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology, held in April, 1993, included a symposium on traditional cultural properties and consultations with traditional communities, which I co-organized with Charles Carroll of the New Mexico Bureau of Land Management. The symposium was entitled "Take Me to Your Leader" as an ironic comment on one of the common misconceptions about consultations with traditional communities—the misconception that one can simply

walk into such communities like the proverbial little green men off the proverbial space ship and be taken to "the leader" who will answer all questions and make all things clear in an encounter between two cultures.

The actual process of consultation with traditional communities is much more complicated and is still actively evolving as new laws and regulations requiring consultation are promulgated and as those of us in federal and state agencies charged with carrying out such consultations learn by trial and error. Most of the participants in this symposium have been involved in one way or another in consultations concerning a proposed coal strip mine in west-central New Mexico called the Fence Lake Project. If developed, the Fence Lake Mine will provide the Salt River Project Agricultural Improvement and Power District, a utility company based in Phoenix, AZ, with coal for one of their power plants.

Salt River Project has been very cooperative in trying to identify all historic properties that could be affected by the development of the proposed mine, including traditional cultural properties. Since this project is the first major case in New Mexico where we have tried to integrate traditional cultural property identification completely into Section 106 compliance, the Fence Lake Project had a very big learning curve for everyone involved.

As the word got out that we were working on a major project involving traditional cultural properties, many of us involved with Fence Lake began to receive requests for help and advice from CRM professionals all around the country. These requests were the catalyst for the Society for American Archaeology symposium. We realized that we had learned a lot and that we had things to share with our colleagues who are just beginning to wrestle with the issue of how best to preserve and protect those historic properties classified as traditional cultural properties.

The papers presented below represent a wide spectrum of those involved in preserving traditional properties: federal CRM personnel, SHPOs, Native American specialists in consultations about these issues, archeologists, ethnohistorians, and private industry CRM specialists. We were also very fortunate to have Dr. Thomas F. King, one of the authors of National Register Bulletin 38, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Traditional Cultural Properties*, to serve as our discussant. We hope that the information and the ideas in these papers will be of material assistance to our CRM colleagues who are looking for practical advice on the subject of including traditional cultural properties in the Section 106 process.

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Dr. Judy Brunson Hadley of the Salt River Project consults with Eric Polingyouma about Hopi ethnobotany during the Fence Lake Project, March 17, 1992. Photo by T.J. Ferguson, Institute of the North American West.